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STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,  
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CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION NEW AMBASSADOR IN ARGENTINA,  
HAMAS-ISRAEL, AVIAN FLU, HAITI; BUENOS AIRES 02/21/06

#### 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Major stories today refer to Ambassador Wayne's designation, its positive repercussions in Argentina and the possible topics he will be addressing; Hamas' difficult relationship with Israel; the aftermath of Haiti's elections and the global concern posed by the avian flu and its economic repercussions.

#### 2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

##### - "Bad News"

Marcelo Cantelmi, center-left, leading "Clarín" international editor, writes (02/20) "It's bad news. Israel's toughened stance - calling the NPA 'terrorist authority' and blocking the transfer of NPA funds -- will only strengthen the hardest Palestinian sectors. Part of those actions were the ones which, in the end, paved the way for Hamas to reach the government via clean elections, setting aside Al Fatah's moderate leadership. The fact that this group decided to take part in the elections is a positive fact. The democratic tool proved it's possible to accumulate a broad and decisive power which terrorist attacks deny. It also opened the door to political sectors - a necessary ingredient in a theocratic organization that denies individual rights and wants to build a radical Islamic State. This goal isn't shared by the entire Palestinian people. But if the calamities of this group worsen, this will obviously benefit the most radical sector."

##### - "U.S. Decides to Send FTAA Crusader to Buenos Aires"

Marcelo Raimon, Washington-based contributor, writes in center-right "Perfil" (02/20) "The new U.S. Ambassador in Argentina, Earl Anthony Wayne, is not only a career diplomat. He's a man of important intellectual background who, in addition, faithfully represents the pivots of 'the new U.S. foreign policy' following 9/11: fighting terrorism, 'exporting' democracy, promoting free trade, not only with economic goals but, particularly, as an instrument to prevent poverty from fuelling extremism.

"This is to say, Wayne is on the opposite side of Lino Gutierrez, a more 'political' diplomat coming from the 'Cuban' sector led by Otto Reich... Unlike Gutierrez, Wayne is a low profile official; lobbying in favor of U.S. corporations isn't among his key occupations.

".... A graduate from two of the most prestigious U.S. universities, it will be hard to see Wayne engaging in verbal fencing as the Ambassador in Caracas, William Brownfield does... But, undoubtedly, we must be on the alert for a possible outbreak of real interest for one of the key issues in his resume: tracking down the financial networks of Islamic Fundamentalist groups; and, in this case, looking towards the Tri-border Area.

"In his opinion, national security and the economic development of the poorest countries are closely intertwined. Washington doesn't want the slightest trace in 'Latin America's backyard' of what the White House considers 'terrorist groups.' With the delay in the FTAA, the U.S. decided to speed-up bilateral and regional negotiations, opening the door to agreements with Chile, Peru and CAFTA, while it continues negotiations with Panama, Colombia, Ecuador and, perhaps, Uruguay."

- "Soya Bean Accelerates Wayne's debut"

Ana Baron, center-left, leading "Clarín" Washington-based correspondent, opines (02/21) "Only five days ago the GOA accepted his credentials as the new U.S. ambassador in Argentina. The Senate hasn't confirmed him yet. But Earl Anthony Wayne is already analyzing problems which, unless they're solved, will continue to be on his agenda when he lands in Buenos Aires in June. One of them is the conflict between Monsanto and Argentina, which involves no less than 2 billion dollars.

"In his position as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Issues... Wayne will today receive the Argentine Secretary of Agriculture, Miguel Campos. Although the interview was arranged several weeks ago, Campos will take the opportunity to explain to Wayne the details of the conflict and will undoubtedly request his help.

".... Wayne, an expert on patents, wrote an op-ed for Clarín which appeared on June 24. This is to say, he's well aware of the topic. But, given that this is a legal problem which, for the time being, is in Europe, he'll probably maintain an understanding attitude, but won't commit to any concrete mediation. In any case, Wayne is most likely aware that there are other U.S. companies affected by the problem that will pressure in favor of Argentina...."

- "Chaos' Lessons"

Marcelo Cantelmi, center-left, leading "Clarín" says (02/18) ".... Despite an atmosphere of national dissolution and unstoppable degradation, there was a game of pressure that not only stopped the elections on four occasions. It also tried to lead the country to new chaos, via a runoff that only added fuel to the fire. The goal of that minority was to prevent Preval from reaching power although the cost of this could have led to another degree of anarchy. It's easy to imagine what could have happened if this agreement hadn't been reached. In truth, this solution didn't necessarily save Haiti. But the other one would most likely have led it to destruction."

- "OAS Urges to Maintain Haiti's Support"

Hugo Alconada Mon, center-right, daily-of-record "La Nación" Washington-based correspondent, says (02/19) "In an interview, John Maisto said 'The commitment of the hemisphere and the international community with Haiti must continue for years.'

".... Aside from praising the role of the international community in Haiti, he's very careful with Argentina and Venezuela, reiterating that responsibilities are, above all, domestic. 'There aren't magic formulas,' he said.

"Haiti has experienced tremendous difficulties of all kinds... But let's be patient. The important thing is that it moves forward in the process that began on the day of the elections. The Haitian people voted massively, like never before, and the international community, with the presence of the Minustah, the OAS and other organizations, are supporting them, even with 1.2 billion dollars in aid of which the U.S. will supply 300 million,' said Wayne, who added... 'The link between democracy and development is the nucleus. Holding elections isn't enough. It's necessary to have democratic governments with credible and democratic institutions; a government that will invest in its citizens, their health and education, and to promote the appropriate policies for its growth. This combination creates the synergy that leads to prosperity,' said Maisto...."

- "Industry in Jeopardy"

Claudio Mario Aliscioni, center-left, leading "Clarín" says (02/21) "Clearly, there are a handful of reasons that forced the key European governments to initiate now an offensive against the 'avian flu.' In addition to the obvious purpose of keeping public health at bay from any risk in the richest countries, we now have the specific interests of a poultry industry that moves billions of dollars in trade. This is clear in France and Italy, with renowned cuisines of international fame. The future of the economy is jeopardized by the fears of a population - refined in its taste and consumers of white meat -- that cut back on its consumption of poultry."

13. To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our classified website at:  
<http://www.state.sqov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

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GUTIERREZ